

THE NATIONAL TRIBUNE.

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THE NATIONAL TRIBUNE.

WASHINGTON, D. C., AUGUST 24, 1893.

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THE MEXICAN PENSION ROLL.

One Which is Not "Purged," and in Which There Are No Suspensions.

On the Mexican Pension Roll there are the names of 15,215 survivors and 7,292 widows, and something over 3,000 cases were pending at latest reports. This makes a total of 25,497, or several thousand more men than the United States had in Mexico at any one time during the war.

These all receive either \$5 or \$12 a month. Among the names are those of the widow of Gen. Samuel Cooper, a New Yorker by birth, who was Adjutant-General of the United States Army at the outbreak of the war, and used his position to aid the rebels in preparing for the struggle. He resigned his position to become Adjutant-General of the Southern Confederacy, and officiated as such until the rebellion collapsed. Mrs. Cooper has been drawing a pension since June 6, 1887.

The widow of Thomas J. ("Stonewall") Jackson, who was next to Lee the most popular commander of the rebel armies.

The widow of Maj.-Gen. George E. Pickens, who commanded a division in the rebel army.

The widow of Maj.-Gen. Gideon J. Pillow, who commanded a division in the rebel army.

The widow of Maj.-Gen. Jas. R. Chalmers, who was Forrest's chief lieutenant.

The widow of Maj.-Gen. Dabney H. Maury, who commanded the rebel troops at the battle of Chickasaw Bay.

The widow of Sidney Smith Lee, who was dismissed from the Navy for "going over to the enemy," and afterward became a Commodore in the rebel army.

Hon. S. B. Maxey, late United States Senator from Texas, who has been drawing his pension since May 27, 1887. He was a Major-General in the rebel army.

Hon. Jas. Z. George, Senator from Mississippi, and who served in the rebel army as a Colonel. The number of his certificate is 17,214.

Hon. A. H. Colquitt, Senator from Georgia, who was a Major-General in the rebel army, draws a pension under certificate 19,199.

The widows above mentioned are of men who were educated at the Government expense, and afterward fought to destroy the Government. They went on the roll at once, while last April there were pending the claims of 145,520 widows of Union soldiers who had not yet been able to get on the roll.

The usual stately dignity which pervades the Senatorial proceedings was somewhat disturbed by Senator Wolcott remarking that the title of the bill "An act to secure depositors in National banks" had better be changed to "to secure depositors for National banks."

SPRINGER has been despoised from the Chairmanship of the Committee on Ways and Means, and the rhetorical Wilson, of West Virginia, put in his place. This is supposed to mean a radical tariff reduction policy.

THE BEST WAY

To get ready for the great fight for soldiers' rights is to get up big clubs for the veterans' champion, THE NATIONAL TRIBUNE.

INVESTIGATE THE PENSION ROLL.

Why is it that the pension-hating papers are so silent—or else so actively hostile to THE NATIONAL TRIBUNE's proposition to determine the character of the pension-roll? They have been vociferous for years for an investigation of the roll, and filled thousands of columns of truculent denunciation of the multitude of disreputable characters that they alleged could be found upon it.

They did this because they believed that it would be impossible to give the lie to their calumnies. They knew that an examination of the entire pension-roll was well-nigh an impossibility. There is no way in which so large a mass of cases as 900,000 can be properly examined in any reasonable number of years. If an expert could average a careful examination of one case a day it would take 1,000 experts three years to go through the whole mass; or, it would take 500 experts six years, or 250—still an incredibly large force—12 years.

THE NATIONAL TRIBUNE met these enemies with a challenge so fair and conclusive that it commended itself at once to the good sense of all fair-minded men.

It demanded—and still demands—that a test be applied, which can be done in a few hours, and which will settle the whole question in the public mind, and at once.

We have asked that all the essential facts be given in regard to 1,000 or more cases taken consecutively from some designated place on the roll.

Nothing can be fairer than this. The veterans of the country are willing to stand or fall by it. Certainly if the pension-roll is loaded, as our enemies say, with deserters, bounty-jumpers, shirks, short-term, late-day, big-bounty men, and other undeserving characters, the 1,000 cases drawn out will show this conclusively. The disreputable pensioners—if there are any—are not stowed away by themselves in any one part of the roll. There must necessarily be as many of them in the 1,000 cases that happen to be taken, as there are in any and every other 1,000 cases on the roll.

If our enemies really believe a portion of the slanders they have been uttering they should rise as one man and second THE NATIONAL TRIBUNE's proposition, in the expectation of getting abundant proof of their assertions. It would convince the country as nothing else could of the urgent need of "purging the pension-roll." That they do not accept our challenge shows conclusively that they know they have been lying recklessly and malignantly about the soldiers of the country.

We still hope that Commissioner Lochren will see the wisdom of ordering this investigation as a sure way of vindicating the honor of his comrades.

THE FINANCIAL SITUATION.

Infinitely the best thing that Congress can do is to simply repeal the purchase clause of the so-called Sherman law, make a declaration that it will not tinker with the tariff for a year, at least, and then promptly adjourn.

Most important of all is the declaration in regard to the tariff. If this were made it would immediately render saleable 350,000,000 pounds of wool now in the farmers' hands, and unmarketable, because of the uncertainty as to whether the country is to be flooded with foreign wools and foreign goods. If this wool could be sold at or near last year's prices, it would put many million dollars into active circulation among the farmers. This would only be the beginning. Assured of non-interference with the tariff, every factory in the country would speedily start up, because the stocks of manufactured goods of all kinds have been run down very low since the results of the elections last Fall hoisted the danger signal, and warned the business men of the country to look out for breakers. From 1,000,000 to 2,000,000 men now out of employment, without means of obtaining food and clothing for themselves and families, would be given work and wages, and once more there would be a ready sale for all that our farmers can produce.

Even with the powerful discouragements of a prospective tariff slaughter, the great recuperative power of the country will manifest itself, and the sentinels on the watch-towers can see unmistakable signs of improvement. R. G. Dun & Co.'s Weekly Review of Trade, which always leans to the cautious side, says of the aspect of business last week:

"There is a rift in the clouds. Faint and yet definite signs of improvement are all the more because they come, not from possibly delusive hopes or from momentary foreign aid, but from the good sense and wonderful recuperative power of the people themselves. Business is trying to go ahead without waiting for it. It produced little effect, \$9,000,000 more during the week, does not go to the right spot, but the people are creating a home-made currency for themselves by using certified checks in paying employees, settling local accounts and purchasing grain and cotton. Little money comes back as yet from timid lenders, and the paralysis of exchange is nearly as complete as ever; but that very fact pushes each section and city into relying more on itself and less on Government aid and Wall Street."

Resumptions are now becoming somewhat frequent, and in the very shrinkage of production men see evidence that demand must soon overtake supply. Pig-iron does not rally, but sells at \$14 here and \$13 at Pittsburgh for No. 1, though the weekly output has been reduced 40 per cent. since May 1. Though five concerns have failed and 24 have stopped during the week, 14 have returned. Sales of wool in seven weeks have been only 17,575,000 pounds against 50,327,380 pounds last year and 37,450,000 pounds in 1891.

Several fewer cancellations are met in dress goods than in more than a year. Failures of banks and failures of banks have become both less important and less frequent, though the greatest caution is shown in accommodations. The re-employment for the Northern Pacific had been so fully discounted that it produced little effect, though this is the third great railroad default this year, and the aggregate stocks and bonds of the three roads amount to \$650,000,000.

A GREAT OPPORTUNITY.

The country wants relief. The whole land is crying for Congress and the President to do something to break the iron band of the financial stringency—and to do it at once.

The clamorous need is for more money in active circulation—more currency outside of the bank reserves and the double-locked vaults of the safety deposit companies.

All sorts of devices are being resorted to to supply the need of currency. The banks of New York have resorted to dangerous makeshifts in the shape of clearing-house certificates, of which they have issued about \$36,000,000. The bankers of other cities have followed their example, until it is estimated that there are about \$75,000,000 of these outstanding, and there is a protest among sound business men against any more being issued.

In the Interior, the far West, and the Southwest they are resorting to notes, certificates, and other dangerous expedients to keep factories going and move the crops now coming into market.

The President can relieve all this embarrassment inside of a fortnight if he will only exercise the powers with which he is clothed by law.

He can direct the Secretary of the Treasury to have coined into dollars all the silver bullion now stored in the Treasury vaults. The moment this coinage is begun the Secretary will have the right to issue silver certificates for the whole of the coinage value—about \$150,000,000.

This amount diffused through the entire country will at once end the currency famine, stop the ruinous shrinkage of prices and bring a prompt resumption of business activity and good times.

Next, the President can direct the Secretary of the Interior to have new life put into the adjudication of claims in the Pension Bureau and the immediate allowance of some 130,000 claims which are believed to be lying there virtually completed and only waiting the formal act of allowance. Probably 150,000 more could be allowed at an early date. These would require about \$60,000,000 to make the first payments. Whatever remains of the sum above that needed for pensions could be expended in necessary work of public improvement.

The newly-issued certificates—or the silver dollars themselves, for that matter—can be sent to the Pension Agencies for distribution to the long-waiting men and women whose just claims will have at length been settled.

By this means every dollar of the whole \$150,000,000 will in a short while be placed where it will do an immense amount of good. The pensioners will immediately pay out their allowances to their neighbors, and these in turn will discharge their indebtedness with the money, in a short while the \$150,000,000 will pay debts to the amount of \$1,000,000,000, the currency famine will end, business will everywhere revive, and the United States will have discharged its indebtedness to a host of its faithful servants, and an inconceivable amount of good will have been accomplished in many directions.

It is one of the greatest opportunities that ever came to a President.

Will Mr. Cleveland profit by it?

CHANGING THE RATIO.

Secretary Carlisle has given very strong reasons against the proposition to change the ratio between silver and gold to 20 to 1 in the immense cost of the operation. It is by no means the most powerful argument against it. In the first place it would be giving away much of the case to the bimetalists. They have contended that the depression of silver is merely temporary, and the result of a conspiracy to raise gold at the expense of silver and the debtor class. If the United States Government officially accepts this depression, or any portion of it, it would be a powerful influence toward making it permanent. Afterwards there would be little hope of raising silver above 20 to 1.

Then, too, a ratio of 20 to 1 would satisfy nobody. It would be so far below the market value of silver that the dollars coined would still have to depend upon the Government fiat for their acceptance, and if a dollar must have any fiat quality it might as well continue as it is.

Certainly if France is able to carry \$700,000,000 at the ratio of 15 to 1 we should be able to carry \$400,000,000 worth at a ratio of 16 to 1.

It were infinitely better not to tinker any more with silver until the value of the metal is definitely settled. Repeal the purchasing clause of the Sherman law, and then wait and see what results will follow.

WHAT ARE THEY DOING?

The Pension Bureau has about 2,000 clerks and 3,000 Surveys—in all about 5,000 employees.

The weekly reports from the Bureau show the following number of certificates issued:

Week ending Aug. 20	1,154
Week ending Aug. 27	1,068
Week ending Aug. 12	1,198
Week ending Aug. 19	1,355

Total for four weeks
 4,775 |

Average per week
 1,194 |

Average per working day
 186 |

That is, it takes five men nearly a week to allow one case, and the whole 5,000 only average about .039 of a case—about two-fifths of one per cent. of a case—a day, among them. It other words, it takes 253 men working one whole day to allow a single pension for a broken-down veteran.

The question naturally arises: What is the Pension Bureau being run for—to pension the old soldiers, or the army of employees?

So "Silver-Dollar" Bland was retained after all as Chairman of the Committee on Coinage, Weights and Measures.

THEY HAVE REASON TO FEAR.

"No deserving pensioner need fear," continually harp the pension-haters. But they do fear, and they seem to have every reason to fear.

From every part of the country come reports of veterans of unimpeachable disability, and undeniable good service, being suspended from the rolls, and required to furnish inside of a few weeks still more stronger proof than that which it has taken them years to secure. They see comrades like Justice Long, of Michigan, than whom there is no more deserving in the whole country, suddenly pilloried before the whole people as an arrant fraud. Frightful injuries received in the service of his country, and a long life of honor and esteem among his fellow-citizens, did not prevent him being held up before the Nation as a mark for condemnation. After that exhibition every veteran felt that he had only too much reason to fear.

Nor, unfortunately, is this all. Time is everything with the veterans. "He gives twice who gives quickly," said President Cleveland in his recent message. It is infinitely more than this in the matter of pensions. More than 40,000 comrades are dying every year. Every 12 months sees a larger army than Grant had at Shiloh, or Rosecrans had at Stone River, pass from earth. To delay giving pensions means to defraud these men of rights which they have bought with their blood.

The last reports at hand from the Pension Bureau show that there were claims pending April 1, 1893:

Old wars	4,400
Indian wars	4,313
Army Nurses	758
Service since March 1, 1861	192,629
Act of June 27, 1890	166,550
Additional to prior applications	121,151
Application for increase	239,951

Total
 759,861 |

Of these there were on the completed files and ready for final action April 1, 1893, 133,006 cases.

The weekly reports from the Pension Bureau show an average allowance of about 1,200 cases per week. At this rate it would take over two years to dispose alone of the cases on the completed files—and presumably ready for allowance—April 1, 1893, to say nothing of advancing other cases. In that time at least 80,000 veterans will have died, tens of thousands of whom probably had their cases among those on the completed files last April.

Yet, the soldier-hating papers reiterate that "no deserving soldier has any reason to fear."

We say that he has everything to fear, if delay in allowing his claim is going to be as effective as its rejection would be.

The only way to remove the fear that clutches every veteran's heart is to inaugurate a period of business-like activity in the Pension Bureau, which will rapidly and effectively settle the merits of every case now in the office, and promptly allow those which are meritorious. There is absolutely no reason why, with the present force employed in the Bureau, every case now before it should not be disposed of before Dec. 31, 1894.

So "Watch-dog" Holman is entirely off the Committee on Appropriations, of which he has been an efficient member for so many years, and made a National reputation as a guardian of the Treasury. He has been sent into honorable exile as Chairman of the Indian Committee. We shall see the meaning of this extraordinary thing a little later on.

THE Southern comrades are organizing to make a determined push in the coming National Encampment for Comrade Edgar Allen, Past Junior Vice Commander-in-Chief, and Past Department Commander of Virginia, for Commander-in-Chief. In addition to having a strong candidate they have many strong reasons why the Commander-in-Chief should go at some time to the South. They will point out to the National Encampment the courageous effort they have been making for years to keep the campfires of Loyalty burning brightly in Dixie, and the success they have achieved amid discouragements such as no other comrades have had to encounter. They will claim that Departments numbering many less than they have in the South, and with much less reason for recognition, have been given very substantial honors, while nothing of importance has ever come as a show of appreciation of the work done by the comrades in the rebellious States.

THE hope that we expressed two weeks ago of the rapid recovery of Hon. J. Logan Chipman, of Michigan, was unfortunately ill-based. He suffered a relapse and died at his home in Detroit, on the morning of Aug. 17. The comrades have lost a sincere and faithful friend. No matter what his party cause dictated he could be relied on all the time to vote for the interest of the veterans.

THE utter lack of commanding financial wisdom and of sound practical business sense has been the most striking feature of the Congressional proceedings thus far. No one seems to thoroughly understand the situation of the country, and no one has proposed any plan of relief, which has commended itself to the public attention.

OVER \$30,000,000 in gold will arrive in this country during this month to pay for wheat and other products. The shipments of wheat last week were the largest in our history. The commercial situation will take care of itself while Congress does nothing but talk.

THE chief need in Congress seems to be for the establishment of a party between illimitable talk and effective action for the benefit of the country.

MISSIONARY WORK.

EDITORIAL NOTE: I have been an enthusiastic reader and patron of THE NATIONAL TRIBUNE for a number of years, and am happy to say that my views harmonize with its editorial utterances on most subjects, but I am compelled to enter a protest concerning your editorial note in the issue of July 27 in relation to foreign missionary work. Many of your readers are Ministers of the Gospel, and the belief that "God hath made of one blood all nations of men to dwell on all the face of the earth," and who see in the heathen of India, China and other lands brothers whom it is their duty to rescue from idolatry and superstition. Many of the old veterans who read your paper are Christian laymen who pray for the coming of Christ's Kingdom and give largely of their means to further its progress. One of the best-known veterans of the United States is Chaplain McCabe, who has talked and sung millions of dollars into the Lord's treasury for the help of humanity at home and abroad. Upon the Christian Church is laid the obligation by no less authority than Christ himself to "Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature." It is also a well-known fact that the churches that are doing most for the salvation of men in foreign lands are also doing most for the same purpose at home. The Methodist Episcopal Church will expend this year for missions in the foreign world \$1,011,383, and for purely missionary work in the United States and Territories \$581,283. Besides all this the Church Extension Society aids in building churches all over the great West and the South. Its Freedmen's and Society establish in aid of supporting schools for the colored people and whites throughout the South, in which enterprise it has expended millions of dollars and educated many thousands of both races for the practical duties of life. On what was formerly slave territory, and including Oklahoma and Indian Territories, it has 502,225 communicants and 6,221 churches, the latter valued at \$123,811,585. In addition to all this large sum of money is expended in the Deaconess work and local missionary effort in the great centers of population and other places. I have not the records of other branches of the Christian Church at hand, but am sure that the facts will show that in every instance where any of the leading denominations are doing any considerable amount of foreign missionary work, it is also doing much to evangelize the masses at home. You will also find that in every case where a Church has been sold of that missionary spirit that aims to send the Gospel to the heathen in foreign lands it has also been doing much to evangelize the masses at home. Any argument that would withhold the Gospel of Christ from the heathen in other countries would be an equally valid reason why we should not have it at home. Its motto is, "Christ for all the world, and all the world for Christ."

Yours in F. C. and L., J. R. KEYS.

Pastor Methodist Episcopal Church, New Lisbon, O.

EDITORIAL NOTE: I have been an enthusiastic reader and patron of THE NATIONAL TRIBUNE so often right, right upon this question having mentioned recently in its pages. Are not the following paragraphs true?

1. That all denominations of recognized Christian earnestness, whose efforts are prospered, have engaged, without exception, in missionary enterprises.

2. That such denominations lead all others (if not all) in their work in home fields.

3. That these Christians, numbered by the millions, having wise leaders whose intelligence would not be called in question—themselves equal in intelligence and character with any people that we know of—have been doing this work in connection with them—have moved to do this not by any inconsiderate enthusiasm, but by the profound conviction that Jesus Christ tells them to do it. As, for instance, Matt. 28: 19: "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." Here is the only missionary effort commended, but to be continued to the end of the world. As these Christians claim to be "soldiers" of this great Captain, they seek to obey him here as elsewhere.

If the Editor seemed in his vast revolution and perpetual change Christians to abandon missionary effort, as indicated, we see only two courses open to secure it:

1. Convince them that the Bible is not to be believed; or

2. That it does not teach the duty of foreign missionary work.

Can a deep conviction be removed in any other way? Now, there are very many Christians who are supporters and admirers of THE NATIONAL TRIBUNE, and they expect to be, for its general course is well worthy of such regard; but its attitude, nevertheless, on this subject makes them sorry.

ONE OF THE CHRISTIANS.

Delavan, Wis., July 28, 1893.

Our correspondents present their side of the case with great force, and yet we persist in our belief that the money, zeal, and energy which has been applied to foreign missionary work had better be concentrated on home fields of effort. This for two reasons:

1. That there are important fields of labor in this country which have been sadly neglected, and our duty is first toward those of our own household; and

2. The discouraging barrenness of results from an enormous expenditure of money, ability, and religious zeal in foreign fields, notably those of China and India.

As to the first—and going outside of our great cities, which at once suggest themselves—we firmly believe that nowhere on earth is there greater need of missionary work than among the poor whites of the South, particularly those of the mountain regions. The writer speaks from experience, for he was born and reared among those people, and he is confident that nowhere can be found men and women living on a lower moral plane, and yet who would respond more quickly to the right kind of religious instruction? A large portion of them—especially those dwelling in the desolate pine barrens and in the out-of-the-way mountain recesses—are the descendants of the criminals, paupers, and vagabonds whom England exported to this country about two centuries ago and sold to the planters. They worked out their time, escaped, or were driven off the plantations when the planters found that the labor of purchased slaves—held for life—was more profitable than that of these white bondsmen. They "squatted" on any piece of worthless land they could find, and if their descendants have not retrograded they have at least not advanced. It was almost impossible for them to do so. There was no profitable labor for them, except for the comparatively few, who became overseers. They could make nothing by cultivating the ground, because slave labor on the big plantations made competition impossible in agricultural products. They could not learn trades, because mechanical industries were not encouraged in the South. No schools were maintained to educate them, and no one took any sort of interest in their spiritual welfare, except the illiterate, unpaid preachers who raised up among them.

Right here we want to pay a tribute to the much-abused "hell-fire" Methodist preachers of a past generation. It has been the fashion to ridicule them, but looking back now over several decades at their work, we are certain that no other agency did so much toward lifting the poor whites out of their moral slough than these same derided but faithful, zealous, heroic evangelists. They were rude of speech, but they

spoke a language that their hearers could not fail to understand, and they knew exactly where to reach their minds. But there were great tracts which even these earnest gospellers failed to enter, and probably there are the same to-day, where the people scarcely attend any form of religious worship from one year's end to another, and where they are as ignorant, vicious and superstitious as their transported ancestors. Of late years the Presbyterians have been giving much attention to this class with good results, but there is an abundant field there for years to come for the missionary efforts of all the Churches in the United States.

2. We believe that it is a growing conviction in the minds of thinkers on missionary work that Christianizing work in such semi-civilized countries as China and Hindustan is well-nigh fruitless. Think of how many good, earnest, capable men and women have gone to those countries, how hard they have labored, how much money has been spent in the support of missions, and then consider the paucity of results. The fact is that the Hindu and Chinese minds are less receptive of Christian truths than those of poor barbarians.

At an Episcopal Congress held a few years ago Canon John Taylor stated that in one field in India over \$500,000 had been expended and there were only 13 converts to report, and these were all in the families of the Christianized helpers at the mission. On the other hand, the Mahometans, who had not expended a rupee for proselyting, numbered their converts by the hundred thousands.

This is why we believe that our churches should suspend their foreign missionary work, at least until it is made certain that every man, woman and child in the United States be given an opportunity to hear the Gospel preached every Sunday in the year. Leaving out of the question the hordes of densely ignorant Italians, Hungarians, Bohemians, Poles and Russians who throng to our shores, there are millions of illiterate, untaught, untrained native whites and negroes in this country, among whom missionary work will have far richer results than if expended in such remote and unproductive fields as Hindustan and China.

THE veterans will be pleased to learn that Comrade Augustus N. Martin, of Indiana, has been retained as Chairman of the Committee on Invalid Pensions of the House of Representatives. Comrade Martin is a faithful friend of the veterans, and has always labored hard in their interests. The rest of the committee are:

Fyan, Mo.; Hare, Ohio; McEtrick, Mass.; Baldwin, Minn.; Graham, N. Y.; McDonald, Ill.; Erdman, Pa.; Fielder, N. J.; Taylor, Tenn.; Pyckler, S. D.; Lacey, Iowa; Meiklejohn, Neb.; Strong, Ohio.

TAMMANY seems in twin over the silver question—that is, if one can conceive of any question of abstract principle having the slightest interest for the associated spoils-grabbers. At all events, Senator D. B. Hill is working to catch the free-silver vote, while Bourke Cochran is the champion of Grover Cleveland's monometallic policy.

Is there anything ominous in the fact that the new Pension Agent at Pittsburgh is named Skinner?

A RATIO of 20 to 1 would make the silver weigh just 516 grains, or 103½ grains—nearly one-quarter of an ounce—heavier than now. It now weighs 412½ grains.

PERSONAL.

Col. Hubert Dilger, who fought so gallantly at Cananville, as mentioned in our issue of Aug. 10 in an article on that battle by Lieut. Col. Augustus C. Martin, has not received one-half of the recognition he should. Gen. O. O. Howard, in making a request to President Harrison to have the Colonel appointed to a command at West Point, says of his services: "Graduating in 1855 from the Military School of Baden, Germany, he entered our army by permission of the Grand Duke of Baden to serve during the war. His first duty was to organize and command a battery of mountain artillery with the 1st Corps in his campaign against Jackson in West Virginia, and the Shenandoah Valley, participating in all the engagements from Franklin to Cross Keys and Port Republic. At Cross Keys he commanded four batteries. After this he was with the 1st of the 1st Ohio Art., and fought through the Rappahannock campaign from Cedar Mountain to second Bull Run under Gen. Sigel and Schurz, his only commission being a complimentary one from Gov. Pierpont, of Virginia, in 1862. In this time he made his permanent home in the United States